

# State Reporter



Washington Women Lawyers

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## WWL Mission Statement

*The principal purposes of Washington Women Lawyers are to further the full integration of women in the legal profession, and to promote equal rights and opportunities for women and to prevent discrimination against them.*

## Life + Work in the Balance

*Christina Gerrish Nelson*

I was asked to write this article about two weeks ago. I thought about writing it since then: while I finished a summary judgment motion; when I rushed home from work to take my daughter to dance class; while I prepped for a mediation; when I was at my son's preschool orientation; when I was at the office early and late trying to get work done prior to Memorial Day weekend; while I was running late-night loads of laundry because nobody had anything to wear the next day ... essentially, while I was doing all the myriad of things that make up my life and my work. Now I am finally writing it. Like many of you, I am living in a perpetual existence of life plus work plus everything else, and even this article is subject to it.

Even in the midst of it all, though, I may or may not be the best person to be writing this piece, because I have been having a hard time wrapping my mind around the term 'Work-Life Balance' as of late. Not just because I am busy (we all are), but because the term itself has begun to strike me as odd. As much as I am a proponent of the underlying concept of achieving some kind of satisfaction with both one's work life and daily life (as lawyers and beyond), I'm not so sure that the

term Work-Life Balance actually describes what we are after.

By referring to what we are trying to achieve as Work-Life Balance, somewhere along the line we have acquiesced to a definition of "Work" as the epicenter around which all of "Life" must fit. In the term Work-Life Balance, "Work" is the core and "Life" (our relationships, families, kids, health, sustenance, self-care) is secondary to it. Even though life is truly the center post of our daily existence (whether we want to admit it or not), the term Work-Life Balance switches that around. It directs our focus on our "Work." To do anything but "Work" in life you must find "Balance" to do it.

And then there is the term "Balance." This term has been the subject of much debate over the years, as it suggests that there is a way to achieve equilibrium between "Work" and "Life," which it turns out is somewhat of a fallacy. Other words for balance are symmetry and stability. I can't think of a single day since my eldest was born almost seven years ago (and many days before that as well) that balance, equilibrium, symmetry or stability describe what I do in life and my work as a lawyer. And I know I'm not alone.

No matter how hard we try, where

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## Q&A with Michelle González

*Michelle González is an Assistant Dean at the University of Washington School of Law. She has practiced in the areas of employment law, civil rights law, tort law, complex litigation, and disability law. She has served as a trial attorney at the EEOC, a staff attorney for U.S. Magistrate Judge Monica J. Benton, and a part-time lecturer at the University of Washington School of Law and Seattle University School of Law.*

**Washington Women Lawyers:** *What made you decide to pursue a law degree and a policy degree?*

**Michelle González:** I developed an awareness and interest in law and public policy as a teenager by reading the editorial section of the newspaper. I was especially interested in public education reform issues. As a college student in the 80s, I heard a speech given by former Mayor Henry Cisneros of San Antonio, Texas. His speech inspired me to seek an internship with his office. After I graduated from college, I worked on various voter registration and get-out-the-vote campaigns in largely Latino communities in the Los Angeles area, where I grew up. I also worked for my state senator as a California Senate Fellow where I helped pass legislation to curb unscrupulous lending practices. I remember feeling empowered by being able to affect change through the legislative process. Given my interests, I decided to pursue the joint degree program with UC Berkeley School of Law and Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.

**WWL:** *Tell us about your work at the UW School of Law.*

**MG:** I work in administration at the

law school as part of the Dean's leadership team. I head the Center for Professional and Leadership Development, which provides programming to help our students be competitive in a changing legal market. We also work with employers to assist them in finding qualified candidates when they are hiring. In addition, I serve on the Dean's Committee for Diversity and Inclusion, an issue I care deeply about.

**WWL:** *Describe one or more of the*



*Michelle González*

*most memorable challenges you have faced as an attorney.*

**MG:** As a newer attorney I investigated a case in which several workers had suffered carbon monoxide poisoning in an eastern Washington

apple packing facility. My firm was investigating to determine whether they would take the plaintiffs' case. After interviewing witnesses, I learned the windows in the building had been sealed to avoid insects getting on the fruit, which was going to be shipped to Japan. Because the work area was sealed off, people became ill due to carbon monoxide from the forklifts. Employees were ordered to continue working despite the fact that people were fainting and becoming physically ill. Several workers had to be hospitalized due to carbon monoxide poisoning. The Department of Labor & Industries fined the employer a few thousand dollars, and there was a possibility our firm would sue for damages beyond what was available through the worker's compensation system. Ultimately, my firm did not take the case. In my view, the legal system fell far short of remedying the harm caused in this case and in deterring this employer and others from engaging in harmful labor practices.

**WWL:** *What is the most useful piece of career advice you have received?*

**MG:** After I made the decision to be an at-home parent, one of my mentors said to me, "work will always be there." What he meant was it was okay to take time to spend with my children, and I would be able to resume work.

**WWL:** Describe the role that networking and mentoring has played in your career.

**MG:** I had to learn how to be

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## Practicing Family Law and the Evolving Definition of the 'Collaborative Lawyer'

*Dena Pickering Allen*

For those of you who venture into disputes between family members, you know very well that these types of cases are often complicated by emotional nuances that make dispassionate reasoning for the parties difficult if not impossible. These angry and 'wounded' family member litigants may even be pushing for a scorched earth legal approach. The problem with this approach: Like it or not, these family member litigants will often be required to have some type of ongoing civil relationship because of their children or other family relationships. The most typical example is divorcing parents; even if their children are adults they will need to get along at graduations, weddings, and births, and then there are the activities of their grandchildren that can mean decades of ongoing interaction. What will it mean if their relationship has become so fractured in the course of their divorce that it is not only horrible for them to be in the same room, but uncomfortable for their extended family members? The same concern arises in Trust and Estate disputes, and even Guardianships.

Ugly litigation between family members can have long-term and devastating consequences for litigants. As attorneys, we can help our clients by providing a form of advocacy that is attune to not only their legal issues, but also their social and psychological needs. In every way we practice family law, we should strive for the highest standards of respect and civility, not just because our RPCs require it, but because of the price our clients will otherwise pay long after their

dispute has concluded. As practitioners, we now have a new tool in our belt for helping clients that are seeking a respectful and cooperative environment that avoids the need for either of them to ever see the inside of a courtroom. This new



*Dena Pickering Allen*

*Credit: Burke law Group PLLC*

resource is called Collaborative Law and it is defined at Chapter 7.77 RCW.

In its simplest terms, Collaborative Law requires that the parties have 'Collaborative Lawyers' and that these attorneys have a representation agreement with their client that disqualifies them from appearing in court to represent a party in a proceeding related to the collaborative law matter (subject to certain narrow statutory exceptions). In a collaborative law case, the parties meet together with their attorneys to develop their goals and interests in their particular dispute and then strive to find solutions that meet those goals and interests.

There are national and state professional groups, as well as local prac-

tice groups that are all collectively dedicated toward educating the public and attorneys about this model of alternative dispute resolution. Often these groups require both mediation training and collaborative law training to be a member. Two such professional groups for Washington attorneys are the International Association of Collaborative Professionals (IACP) and Collaborative Professionals of Washington (CPW). Additionally, most counties near Washington's larger cities have one or more professional groups. The extensive training is required because Collaborative Law is a method of practicing law that involves both a new set of interpersonal and communication skills not associated with litigation, and a paradigm shift in how to advocate for the client. A paradigm shift is a theoretical shift away from adversarial and positional litigation to a collaborative team and interest-based approach for problem solving and advocacy. Although the Uniform Collaborative Law Act was only recently codified in Washington, it is not a new concept, and Collaborative Law is now a part of many law school curriculums across the country.

The paradigm shift involves interest development and trust building, with free and full disclosure; the law is a fall back and not the end all. Collaborative lawyers focus on the goals and interests of both parties in the case. Any and all factual information is shared and documented between the parties without the

*(Practicing Family Law, continued*

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## Wills 101 for Lawyers

*Lisa Malpass*

Many lawyers balance the needs of aging family members along with work responsibilities. This can include making health care decisions with their parents and ensuring that their aging relatives have considered and prepared wills so that their belongings are treated in the manner they desire. And wills are not just for aging parents -- lawyers of all ages need to plan for the future.

Preparing for the bar exam may have been the last time that you thought about wills, trusts, and estate planning. As background, your will is a legally-binding statement directing who will receive your property at your death. It also appoints a legal representative to carry out your wishes. However, the will covers only probate property. Many types of property or forms of ownership pass outside of probate. Jointly-owned property, property in trust, life insurance proceeds and property with a named beneficiary, such as IRAs or 401(k) plans, all pass outside of probate. Below are five reasons for having a will.

**First**, with a will (known as testate) you can direct where and to whom your estate will go after your death, even if it is to a charity or benevolent cause. If you die without a will (*i.e.*, intestate), your estate would be distributed according to Washington State Law. Such distribution may or may not accord with your wishes. Therefore, the execution of a Will is a conscious effort to avoid economic and emotional stress placed on the surviving family members.

Many people try to avoid probate

and the need for a will by holding all of their property jointly with their children. This can work, but often people spend unnecessary effort trying to make sure all the joint accounts remain equally distributed among their children. These efforts can be defeated by a long-term illness of the parent or changes in the children's lives, such as marriage, divorce, or the death of a child. A will can be a much simpler means of carrying out your wishes about how assets should be distributed.



*Lisa Malpass*

The **second** reason to have a will is to make the administration of your estate run smoothly. Often the probate process can be completed more quickly and at less expense to your estate if there is a will. With a clear expression of your wishes, there are unlikely to be any costly, time-consuming disputes or emotional disagreements over who gets what.

**Third**, only with a will can you choose the person to administer your estate and distribute it according to your instructions. In Washington State, this person is called your "personal representative" and

is generally identified in the Will. If you fail to name someone, the court will make the choice for you and that is generally the first person or creditor who asks.

**Fourth**, if you have children it is beneficial to nominate a guardian and a successor guardian in the event of death when your children are small. It is a personal decision to appoint a guardian for a minor child and can represent the most important aspect of an estate plan. It is best to find an attorney familiar with appointing guardians for minor children in estate plans.

**Last**, for larger estates, a well-planned Will (or Trust) can help reduce estate taxes. If you have prepared a Will many years ago, you must be mindful of life events, such as divorce, marriage or adoption. Furthermore, the life events of your heirs may impact the distribution of your property or income. Always ensure your Estate Planning documents reflect your current wishes.

*Lisa Malpass' practice at Winston & Cashatt in Spokane focuses on guardianship law, elder law, administrative law, probate matters, public benefits, restraining/protection orders, wills, powers of attorney and health care directives. Lisa represents a broad array of clients ranging from seniors, young families, persons with disabilities, lay guardians, certified professional guardians, businesses and other individuals in Spokane and surrounding communities. Ms. Malpass is also a Title 11 Guardian ad Litem in Spokane and other counties in Eastern Washington.*

*(Life + Work in the Balance, continued from page 1)*

we end up with life + work is typically not a feeling of equilibrium and balance. What really happens is that we become adept at managing the myriad of things we do each day, be those things in the “Work” category or “Life” category. We strategize and prioritize. Sometimes one category wins out, sometimes the other – balance is always a little out of reach, but adaptation and management is constantly underway. We are creative and instinctively try to find a way to make the pieces fit for that moment, recognizing that we may have to reassess and re-prioritize the next moment. Indeed, I think that sometimes it is the very notion that we must separate our life from our work that makes us uncomfortable, causing us angst in our quest for Work-Life Balance as we place a fairytale concept of equilibrium and happiness as our light at the end of the tunnel.

There is no doubt that – as women lawyers, as mother lawyers, as parent lawyers, as lawyers who are caring for aging parents, as *all* lawyers, really – we have life, and we have work, and the two collide. There is also no

doubt that we almost uniformly crave a sense of equanimity (or at least remnants of it) between our life and work worlds. So while I don’t dispute the fundamental notion that ‘Work-Life Balance’ is trying to get at, I suppose what I am suggesting is that although the term has done its job in getting this topic on the table over the years, it doesn’t properly define the conversation anymore.

There is change afoot from the traditional “how can I make my life fit into my work” to “how can I make my work fit into my life.” It is subtle shift, but it is important. There is a whole new perspective emerging about what it takes to succeed at work and live life as a person who cares about anything in addition to work. I hear again and again from lawyers who want to bring life + work together in a way that recognizes the realities of our existence, that feels genuine, that does not force a choice between worlds we love, and that makes us better lawyers in the process.

Do you like my new prescription for rose colored glasses? Ha, maybe. But look around and you may well

notice the little changes here and there that are pointing toward this shift. Perhaps you will realize that you haven’t actually been searching for Work-Life Balance for some time, and that you have instead been trying to redefine it. For instance, you may notice:

- More and more, we talk about our kids and families at work, as a part of our life. That didn’t happen in my law firm experience even 5 years ago. But now I hear recognition from both colleagues and opposing counsel about the fact that we are parents, spouses, and significant others in addition to being lawyers. We aren’t separating “Life” into a separate category, we are bringing it with us to work, and it is not even all that taboo.
- We aren’t waiting for policies to be made to define our Work-Life Balance; we are making the policies. By and large, lawyers I talk to are learning about their options and engaging in the business side of their practice, figuring out how things might fit together today, next year, in five years, in ten

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**Come join us!**

**WWL**  
Washington Women Lawyers

**Renew or Join  
WWL Today**

Learn more about the value of membership & renew your membership on-line at: [www.wwl.org/Membership](http://www.wwl.org/Membership).

As of January 1, 2013, chapter dues have been reduced by \$10 for government/non-profit employees. And for all others, no increases in dues!

## Leaning In: MAMAS and KCWWL Launch Lean In Circles For Lawyers

*Jaime Drozd Allen*

Sheryl Sandberg's book *Lean In* has inspired women throughout the world to meet-up to talk about the strategies presented in her book, what it means to "Lean In," and how women can build tools to more successfully "Lean In" in their own environments. Locally, the King County Washington Women Lawyers ("KCWWL") and the Mother Attorney Mentoring Association of Seattle ("MAMAS") have joined together to co-sponsor a set of Lean In circles for female attorneys in the Seattle area.

The project began as the brainchild of Genevieve Vose Wallace (Partner at Susman Godfrey LLP) and Sarah Visbeek (Associate at Forsberg & Umlauf, P.S.). After an initial kick-off meeting with over 100 attendees, 7 Lean In Circles were formed, with approximately 70 women total participating. The circles are generally categorized by commonalities such as length of practice, practice area, or type of practice (firm or in-house). Some other common thread might also bind the circle's interests, such as women who have taken time off from their careers and are looking to onboard back into the legal profession. The circles are led by one or two leaders who are responsible for organizing the logistics of the circle and facilitating circle meetings.

Lean In circles are not your typical book group; nor, are they designed to be counseling sessions or a forum for members to complain to one another. The intent of the circles is purposeful, solution-oriented, and educational. The circles are highly organized and

use curriculum specified through the Lean In website to maximize the resources and personal experiences of the Circle participants. While the circle curriculum is laid out in detail through the Lean In organization, there is room to adapt the program for an individual circle's needs.



*Jaime Drozd Allen*

The basic framework alternates between two types of meetings: Education Meetings and Exploration Meetings. Education meetings focus on building new skills where the circle members view a video vignette ahead of the meeting. They then come prepared to talk about the topic more thoroughly and run through a "how to" exercise about implementing that topic's theme into the circle members' personal experiences. The video topics range from time management to managing difficult conversations to power and influence to what works for women at

work. Exploration meetings have two members at each meeting share a real-life opportunity or challenge with the circle. The circle members then offer feedback and their own insights and related experiences. Circle members count on the honest exchange of ideas to help one another stretch their skills and work outside of their preconceived comfort zones.

The circles meet ten times throughout the course of a year, with many choosing to take off time during the summer or towards the end of the year. The meetings are 2 hours long. Many of the KCWWL/MAMAS circles have found that the evenings are the only time that is practical for their members to devote this amount of time on a monthly basis. The KCWWL/MAMAS circles meet at a variety of locations from firm conference rooms, to restaurants, to people's homes. Unlike a casual conversation or social group, Lean In Circles rely on the accountability and participation of all members. Members are expected to attend and be an active participant in all meetings so that circles can form trust and strong interpersonal dynamics between the members.

Thus far, the KCWWL/MAMAS sponsored circles are thriving. In the pilot year of the program, the circles are learning to adapt the Lean In curriculum to more clearly address issues that are relevant to attorneys versus general business leaders. The circles are also working through some small changes to the structure of the meetings to better address topics and questions relevant to the circle

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years. Along the way they are becoming savvy at navigating life issues that arise in their work life, and visa versa. This includes topics like billable hours, working from home, origination credit, partnership track, compensation, and setting out a work plan and goals. Women lawyers (and others, too) are changing the conversation from being *told* how they will succeed in life + work to *deciding* how they will succeed in life + work, which is significant.

- We are tapping into our resources and connections, and we have a lot of them. Washington Women Lawyers (WWL), Mother Attorneys Mentoring Association of Seattle (MAMAS), ABA Women Rainmakers, ABA Commission on Women in the Profession, Local and National Networking Groups, Local and National Lean in Circles, LinkedIn, Mentors, Sponsors ... to name a few. We are able to collaborate on topics relating to life + work like never before – we can post a sensitive question anonymously on the MAMAS listserv, we can find a mentor or a sponsor to help us set our career on the right path and make good decisions about how to get there, we can attend a lunch seminar with practical peer discussion about ‘working full time and making it work,’ we can explore what the part-time trend is within firms around town, we can network in a whole new way. We can pool our resources to get what we need in order to make informed decisions about life + work. We may not agree with everything we read or everything

we take in, but we can access and rely on what works for us in our individual life experience – and change it up when we need to do so.



*Christina Gerrish Nelson*

- Apologies are passé – we are not apologizing for being a woman lawyer, a parent lawyer, a mother lawyer. Instead of looking ahead in our future and seeing a series of obstacles about which we must be contrite, we are looking ahead in our future and seeing opportunities that we want to explore. I am fascinated by all the different things that woman lawyers are doing with life + work. There are women lawyers leaning in and moving closer to the top. There are others leaning out of the traditional law firm models and starting virtual contract attorney firms. There is an emphasis on building business our own way, and recognizing the value diversity can bring to a law practice. There is an explosion of possibilities coming at a time when

they are much needed, and the legal market is wrapping them into its fold.

- Old stereotypes are also on the way out. We have all faced them at one time or another in our lawyer lives, and we have all done our part to knock them down. I hear story after story of women lawyers challenging and breaking through the erroneous perceptions that have tried to pin us as “less dependable, less available, more emotional, and less business-oriented.” I also hear story after story of women lawyers who realize that we literally are unable to live up to all the traditional expectations and gender stereotypes in our society, and are overhauling roles at home and work. Both parents working means shared childcare and shared household duties. Long hours at the office means creative meal solutions. Short weekends means collaborative house management and sometimes outside help to get things done. We are steadfastly eroding away at the notion that women lawyers come with unseemly ‘limitations,’ which has always been bunk, but now is being openly defeated.
- We are working together. And, I think that this last one is the most important. There is no way to deal with, address, assess, and problem solve the multitude of life + work issues that arise without support. I see lawyers (women and men) go out of their way to help and mentor one another as we all seek to figure out the best space from which to manage our life + work. We do not have to go it alone.

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*(Q&A with Michelle González, continued from page 2)*

proactive about networking. I tell students and newer attorneys it is important for them to make connections early in their career. Some relationships grow organically, but you also need to work at cultivating relationships. Some of my mentors have been former supervisors or people I have gotten to know through community and professional activities. Mentors have been helpful in many ways, including opening a door to a new job opportunity.

**WWL:** *How, if at all, has being a woman shaped your experience as an attorney?*

**MG:** I recall as a newer associate representing a client who had to bring her infant to an administrative hearing because her sitter was ill. The administrative law judge lost his temper and refused to conduct the hearing even though the infant was asleep in her stroller. He chastised me for not arranging child care. After I explained the situation, he then asked me if I had a license to practice law even though I had appeared in front of him multiple times as the attorney of record. I doubt he would have displayed the same demeanor had my client been represented by one of the male partners at my firm. I was angry and also knew I had to be careful in how I responded. I think women more often than men attorneys have to confront skepticism about their competence and assertiveness.

**WWL:** *What is the value of Washington Women Lawyers to female attorneys today?*

**MG:** WWL is helpful in providing professional development opportunities for women attorneys, including

mentoring and business development. It also serves as a forum to organize and advocate around issues which are particularly important to women attorneys.

**WWL:** *What challenges have you faced in balancing work and family obligations?*

**MG:** The biggest challenge has been finding the right amount of time working on raising children and staying satisfied in my career. For several years after our children were born, I stayed home then worked part-time. This meant I had to re-start my career after a period of it being on hold. When I went back to full-time work, I re-shifted some of my at-home parent responsibilities to my spouse. Everyone had to step up, including the kids in terms of being more responsible for taking care of the day-to-day stuff. There are times my spouse and I feel stretched, but for the most part we have made the balance work.

**WWL:** *What strategies have been particularly useful to you in achieving a satisfying work-life balance?*

**MG:** My approach in finding work-life balance is being patient and flexible with myself. My career has weaved in and out, up and down like a gymnast on uneven parallel bars – and this is okay. It has been important to take time to reflect on what I most enjoy in my work and make sure I continue to grow professionally. I have also followed my own instincts and kept external expectations in perspective.

**WWL:** *What advice would you offer to female attorneys juggling work and family obligations?*

**MG:** I encourage women and men who are juggling work and family to

work with their partner, if they have one, on finding a good balance for their family. If you are dissatisfied with your work-schedule, speak with your employer to find a good work option. If you have a good track record with your employer, there's a good chance they want to keep you satisfied and they may be able to accommodate your needs. Create a network of support, including colleagues who are also meeting the same kind of obligations. You may learn they also want the same things you want and you may be able to change something at work. If you want to pull back in your work to take time for family, then do it and enjoy the time. I hear from many women attorneys that they feel guilty when they are not with their kids because of work and guilty when they are not working as much as they feel they need. Let the guilt go – it doesn't help anyone. Last, if you do decide to reduce your hours at work or be an at-home parent, stay active in your profession through pro bono work, serving on boards and commissions, and continue to maintain and build your professional network.

**WWL:** *Is there anything else you would like to add?*

**MG:** I am hopeful more employers will be creative about work options for employees who are balancing work and family. We also need more men asking for time to meet family obligations so the norm shifts and this isn't viewed as a women's issue, but rather an issue for men and women.



*(Life + Work in the Balance, continued from page 7)*

I don't pretend to be an expert on Work-Life Balance, and maybe my musings are more esoteric than practical for your taste. But I am inspired by the shift I have felt in the general approach to this topic, and I suggest that perhaps that shift has started to take place because our collective subconscious realized that we have been subject to a term that doesn't accurately describe what we are doing in the first place. I love being a lawyer, I love my husband and our home, I love being a Mom, I love my family, and I wouldn't trade any of it. I'm stubborn; I want it all, and I have effectively managed to ignore everyone who has told me that I can't go after what I want. There is no balance in that, surely, but there is all the fulfillment of life, and work, and my fluid yet zigzagging existence between and within these two realms.

No matter what term we use, the fact is that our life + work is in the balance, but it is rarely – if ever – “balanced.” I think we can step away from our quest for balance, and go ahead and own the current reality (and awesomeness) of our (sometimes untidy) lives. Not that we should shy away from making decisions to bring things together as comfortably as possible – by all means, we should be using all of our resources to make things work the best we can. But if our goal for a perfect world of Work-Life Balance seems out of reach, maybe we should be asking ourselves if that perfect world is one that even exists. And we might note, in the meantime, that we have been moving right along in our life + work ... and not doing too bad at it, either.

*Christina Gerrish Nelson's practice at CGN PLLC ([www.cgn-law.com](http://www.cgn-law.com)) focuses on the resolution of construction and*

*commercial claims and disputes. As a mediator, Christina assists parties in finding solutions and achieving settlement in both litigated and pre-litigation claims. A skilled litigator and advocate, Christina has represented contractors, owners, developers, and businesses both in and out of court. Christina has participated in extensive training in alternative dispute resolution through Pepperdine's LL.M. program, and was selected for the AAA Higginbotham Fellows Program in 2014. Christina is the 2014 Board President of Mother Attorneys Mentoring Association of Seattle (See below). Christina is also (and most importantly) the proud mama of two happy and adventurous kids, ages 6 and 3.*



## Meet MAMAS

*Christina Gerrish Nelson*

The Mother Attorneys Mentoring Association of Seattle (MAMAS) was founded in 2006 in an effort to empower attorney mothers and encourage them to succeed while celebrating their roles as attorneys and mothers.

Over the past eight years, MAMAS has become an invaluable source of support and resources for attorney mothers, a place where they can network, share experiences, learn from each other, problem solve, and talk about issues they face in a supportive environment.

MAMAS aims to enhance the recognition of mother attorneys in the profession and community; promote the advancement of mother attorneys within the profession; facilitate the achievement of work-life balance; provide a forum for informing members and the legal profession about issues of particular concern to mother attorneys; facilitate the transition for attorney mothers who have taken time off and wish to re-enter the profession; support mother attorneys contemplating alternative work schedules or extended leaves of absence; and increase the interaction between mother attorneys of diverse backgrounds and practices.

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need to follow the time consuming and potentially costly court rules for discovery. Collaborative Attorneys discuss the law that pertains to their facts, but they do it together with both clients so the parties can hear what each attorney has to say about the law. In family law, where the court sits in equity, it can be very helpful to hear that dialogue.

As practitioners, Collaborative Attorneys are still advocates for their clients, but it is a form of advocacy that (1) focuses on promoting the stated interests of their clients, (2) insures that the client is heard by the other participant(s), and (3) strives to edu-

cate the clients about their options (and the law) so that they can make informed decisions. But ultimately, as Collaborative Attorneys, they let go of the outcome and allow the client to decide what is best for them, their children, and other impacted family members. In Collaborative Law, we strive to do this in a manner that is respectful and produces a mutually satisfactory settlement.

Collaborative Law is such a completely different approach that the challenges presented with making that paradigm shift should not be undertaken without adequate training. For training and practice groups in your area contact CPW.

*Dena P. Allen is an attorney associated (of counsel) with Burke Law Group, PLLC, in Spokane, Washington, where she practices in the areas of family law and estate planning/probate. She has nineteen years of experience practicing law and is an adjunct instructor for the Spokane Community College Paralegal Program where she teaches domestic relations and estate planning/probate. Ms. Allen is a contributing author to the Handbook For Washington Seniors: Legal Rights and Resources (1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2012). As a member of both the Spokane County Bar Association and the Washington State Bar Association, Ms. Allen earned her B.A. from UCLA and her J.D. from Gonzaga University School of Law.*

## Plugging the Leaky Pipeline Part IV

### Having a Legal Career and a Family



L-R: Moderators Shannon Lawless & Pam Jacobson, Panelists Rachel Black, Justice Debra Stephens, Toni Anders, and Davina Childs

*Erica Franklin*

Having a legal career and a family was the focus of the fourth installment of WWL's Plugging the Leaky Pipeline Series, held at Betts Petterson Mines on February 26. The distinguished panelists included Toni Anders, a partner and trial attorney with Betts Patterson Mines; Rachel Black, a litigation partner at Susman Godfrey and founder of MAMAs (Mother Attorneys Mentoring Association of

Seattle); Davina Childs, a patent attorney and chief IP counsel at Vulcan, Inc. and immediate past president of MAMAS; and Justice Debra Stephens, a Justice on the Washington State Supreme Court. WWL's Shannon Lawless and Pam Jacobson moderated the discussion. The panelists addressed a wide range of topics, including what to tell colleagues when leaving the office to attend to family obligations, the pros and

cons of working remotely, the feasibility of working part time, strategies for coping with guilt, and the impact of paternity leave on working mothers. Provocative, informative, and extremely well-attended, the town hall was a resounding success.

*Mark your calendars for the next installment of the Leaky Pipeline series on September 24 from 12-1pm at Perkins Coie. See page 11 for details..*

## Dispatches from the Field: WWL Chapter Updates

### Capitol Chapter

This spring, the Capitol Chapter hosted a meet and greet event with Justice Sheryl Gordon McCloud. This was a great opportunity to get to know the Justice and hear about her experiences both before joining the Court and since she became a Washington State Supreme Court Justice.

### Spokane Chapter

In April, the Spokane Chapter hosted a Collaborative Family Law and Bankruptcy CLE. The CLE consisted of a review of the new Washington Uniform Collaborative Law statute (effective July 28, 2013) as well as bankruptcy issues that may arise during a family law dispute. Also included in this panel CLE was a view from the Bench, featuring the invaluable insight of Spokane Superior Court Judge John O. Cooney, who currently serves on the Family Court, and Commissioner Michelle Ressa, who serves in the Family Law Center.

The Spokane Chapter has scheduled its Summer Party Potluck for August 13, 2014. Please bring a recipe to share for our growing WWL cookbook! More information about our school supply drive and potluck will be forthcoming.

### Request to Chapter Boards

Chapter Board Members: What tools and resources do you use to keep your membership informed and membership lists updated? As new WWL members become involved in the local Chapter Boards, how do you retain institutional knowledge and resources? Please share your best practices (or additional questions) with Vanessa Waldref so that we can promote your policies, procedures, or favorite programs/apps (google docs? facebook?) in the Chapter Updates section of our next newsletter! Contact Vanessa at [vanessa.waldref@gmail.com](mailto:vanessa.waldref@gmail.com)

### *Plugging the Leaky Pipeline Part V: Leadership Styles for Women*

The business world is increasingly rejecting the traditional, top-down approach to leadership in favor of a collaborative leadership style. Many applaud this shift as advantageous towards women, who are traditionally seen as more collaborative, inclusive, and team-oriented. But too strong a collaborative approach—such as asking for permission, appearing indecisive, or failing to assert a strong point of view—can be seen as a weakness. This panel will discuss the characteristics of collaborative leadership, its benefits and pitfalls, what it looks like in the legal world, and how it can be successfully employed by women seeking positions of power and leadership in the legal community.

### Save the Date!

#### Spokane Potluck: August 13

See Spokane chapter update

#### South Asian Bar Association Annual Banquet: October 3

SABAW will hold its annual banquet on October 3.

#### WWL Annual Event: October 10

WWL's 2014 Annual Event will be held at the Foundry by Herban Feast in Seattle. A CLE on the intersection of Washington State and federal law will be held at K&L Gates that afternoon in conjunction with the Annual Event. (start-time TBD).

#### Asian Bar Association Gala: October 24

ABAW will hold its annual gala at the W Hotel in Seattle.

#### Legal Voice Auction: September 20

The Legal Voice Auction is on September 20 at the Seattle Marriott Waterfront.

#### Plugging the Leaky Pipeline: Part V September 24

Part V of this series will take place on September 24 from noon -1pm at Perkins Coie. Speakers will include Justice Mary Fairhurst (Supreme Court), Judy Jenkinson (Perkins Coie), and Bree Kame-ennui-Ramirez (Weyerhaeuser). See panel at left for details!

## Washington Women Lawyers State Board 2013-2014

|                                  |                                  |                                      |  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| <i>President:</i>                | Naomi Ogan                       | <i>Newsletter Editors/ VPs:</i>      | Erica Franklin & Vanessa Waldref           |
| <i>President-Elect:</i>          | Elisabeth Yandell McNeil         | <i>Events VPs:</i>                   | Lauren Sancken & Jacki Badal               |
| <i>Secretary:</i>                | Jennifer Smitrovich              | <i>Professional Development VPs:</i> | Shannon Lawless & Pam Jacobson             |
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| <i>Immediate Past President:</i> | Jeanne Marie Clavere             | <i>Membership VPs:</i>               | Jessie Simanton & Rachel Schaefer          |
| <i>Publicity VP:</i>             | Lara Hruska                      | <i>Diversity VPs:</i>                | Niloufar (Nilly) Park & Marsha T. Mavunkel |
| <i>Judicial Affairs VPs:</i>     | Vicki Mitchell & Rebecca Glasgow | <i>WWL Foundation Liaison:</i>       | Amy Robinson                               |
| <i>Governmental Affairs VP:</i>  | Sarah Jordan                     |                                      |  |
| <i>Legacy VPs:</i>               | Karrin Klotz & Kate Marckworth   |                                      |  |
| <i>Website Editor/VP:</i>        | Jessica Barrett                  |                                      |  |

### Chapter Representatives

|                          |                                |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Capitol Chapter:</i>  | Charity Atchison               |
| <i>Clark/St. Helens:</i> | Jill Sasser                    |
| <i>King:</i>             | Kate Tylee & Rhianna Fronapfel |
| <i>Kitsap:</i>           | Karen Klein                    |
| <i>Pierce:</i>           | Ingrid McLeod                  |
| <i>Snohomish:</i>        | Melanie Thomas Dane            |

|                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| <i>Spokane:</i> | Jaime Hawk    |
| <i>Whatcom:</i> | Bethany Allen |

### Law School Representatives

|                                  |                                    |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>Gonzaga University:</i>       | Jennifer Ballantine<br>Staci Dixon |
| <i>Seattle University:</i>       | Patricia Bredlau                   |
| <i>University of Washington:</i> | Jessica Shen<br>Chrissy Elles      |



### **WWL 2013-2014 State Board**

**Standing Left-to-Right:** Pam Jacobson, Lauren Sancken, Elisabeth Yandell McNeil, Jessica Barrett, Lara Hruska, Gretchen Leanderson, Mindy Carr, Rebecca Glasgow, Marsha Mavunkel

**Seated Left-to-Right:** Niloufar (Nilly) Park, Jeanne Marie Clavere, Naomi Ogan, Shannon Lawless, Erica Franklin

**Not Pictured:** Vicki Mitchell, Rachel Tallon Reynolds, Amy Robinson, Vanessa Waldref, Jacki Badal, Claire Hawkins, Karrin Klotz, Sarah Jordan, Kate Marckworth, Jessie Simanton, & Rachel Schaefer

# WWL Membership Registration and Information

MAIL TO: WWL, P.O. Box 46107, Seattle, WA 98146 OR complete online at [wwl.org](http://wwl.org)

CHECK BOX:  New Member  Renewing Member  Updating Information Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Company/Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Work Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

### MY CHAPTER:

#### Annual Membership Dues:

- Capitol (Thurston) \$45
- Clark/St. Helens \$45
- King \$55
- Kitsap \$45
- Pierce \$50
- Snohomish \$50
- Spokane \$45
- Whatcom \$45
- Other \$45

If there is currently no active chapter in your county, WWL would like to help you start one.

Check here if you are interested in starting a chapter in your county: \_\_\_\_\_

### ADDITIONAL CHAPTERS - Indicate below if you would like to become a member of an additional chapter:

- Capitol (Thurston) \$10
- Clark/St. Helens \$10
- King \$20
- Kitsap \$10
- Pierce \$15
- Snohomish \$15
- Spokane \$10
- Whatcom \$10
- Judiciary \$30 (please indicate a chapter preference by checking a chapter above)
- Government or Non-Profit Employee (take \$10 off your membership dues)
- Student FREE! (please indicate a chapter preference by checking a chapter above)

Optional Contribution to WWL Foundation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*(WWL Foundation is a qualified 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization and contributions to WWL Foundation are tax deductible)*

SUBTOTAL ADDITIONS TO ANNUAL DUES: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Make checks payable to "WWL"

### AREAS OF PRACTICE:

- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative Dispute Resolution | <input type="checkbox"/> Employment       | <input type="checkbox"/> In House Counsel             | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appellate                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental    | <input type="checkbox"/> Internal Investigations      | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Injury       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bankruptcy                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Estate Planning  | <input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual Property/Patent | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Interest       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business/Corporate             | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Law       | <input type="checkbox"/> Judiciary                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Litigation               | <input type="checkbox"/> Government       | <input type="checkbox"/> Labor                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Tax                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contract Law                   | <input type="checkbox"/> General Practice | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use                     | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Law                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Law       | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Aid                    |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elder Law                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Immigration      | <input type="checkbox"/> Municipal Law                |  |

### PRIVACY INFORMATION:

Member Directory: As a benefit of membership, WWL provides two Member Directories on our website. One directory is visible to the public, and the second is visible to our members only. Your profile, which includes your name, employer, work contact information, and practice areas may be shown in the directories. You may continually update and/or limit information shown about yourself in our Directories by logging into the website, and editing your profile. As an initial step, we will include your profile in both Directories.

YES, please include my profile in the directories.  NO, please include only \_\_\_\_\_ info in the directories.

PLEASE CHECK HERE IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BECOME MORE INVOLVED IN WWL.

For more information about getting involved with WWL, please visit [wwl.org](http://wwl.org) or email us at [wwl@wwl.org](mailto:wwl@wwl.org)

# COME JOIN US!



*(Leaning In, continued from page 6)*

members. As part of the organizational effort, the leaders for each circle meet on a monthly basis to draw on one another's experiences working through the curriculum and leading the circles. These leader meetings have been helpful to identify adaptations, overcome logistical hurdles, and share ideas for how to best facilitate productive, meaningful discussions within each circle.

The circles for this year will run through February, 2015, and KCWWL and MAMAS will evaluate closer to that time whether a second year of co-sponsored circles might be initiated. In the meantime, those interested in starting earlier circles can gather circle members and find much of the information, including kick-off kits, videos, and "how to" guides on

the Lean In website ([www.leanin.org](http://www.leanin.org)).

*Jaime Drozd Allen is a litigation partner at Ogden Murphy Wallace. She practices in the areas of products liability, consumer protection, class actions, wrongful death, contracts, UCC, torts, bankruptcy, healthcare, and employment. Ms. Drozd Allen currently sits on the board of MAMA Seattle (Mother Attorneys Mentoring Association of Seattle) and has served on a number of other nonprofit boards. She has also served as a mentor through the Future of the Law Institute and the Family Law Mentor Program. She is a co-leader of one of the KCWWL/MAMAS-sponsored Lean In Circles featured in this article.*



**Washington Women Lawyers**

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Washington Women Lawyers

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Website: [www.wwl.org](http://www.wwl.org)

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**TO:**

*The WWL State Reporter is a publication of Washington Women Lawyers, published three times annually. Please send change of address notices to [wwl@wwl.org](mailto:wwl@wwl.org) with the words "Member change of address" in the subject line.*

## Renew or Join WWL Today

Learn more about the value of membership & renew your membership on-line at:

[www.wwl.org/Membership](http://www.wwl.org/Membership).

As of January 1, 2013, chapter dues have been reduced by \$10 for government/non-profit employees. And for all others, no increases in dues!

To submit Chapter News, event notices, announcements, or ideas for articles, please email Vanessa Waldref ([vanessa.waldref@gmail.com](mailto:vanessa.waldref@gmail.com)) with the word "Announcement" in the subject line.